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California Desert Conservation Area Plan



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Environmental Assessment of Proposed Amendments

January 1982

United States
Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
California Desert District
1695 Spruce Street
Riverside, California 92507

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(C-064)

Dear Reader:

Last June (1981), we invited you and other interested parties to review the final Desert Plan and submit your comments and recommendations. The input that we received from organizations and individuals as well as from our own staff resulted in the amendment proposals contained in this Draft Environmental Analysis report.

My thanks to those of you who sent in comments and suggestions - I hope that you will continue to help us manage your public lands.

The decision to accept or to reject these proposed amendments will be based on a number of factors including effect on the human environment, input from the public, and recommendations of the California Desert District Advisory Council.

We are providing a 60-day period for public review. Please be sure to have your comments in the mail by March 16, 1982. Send your comments to the following address:

California Desert District
Bureau of Land Management
Attn: Plan Amendments
1695 Spruce Street
Riverside, California 92507

Sincerely,

Gerald E. Hillier
District Manager

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The amendment process (Chapter 7 of the California Desert Conservation Area Plan, 1980) has been established to provide flexibility through changes to the Plan occasioned by unanticipated demands or response to future events.

In accordance with the procedures set forth in Chapter 7, the California Desert District has initiated the first semi-annual amendment review. A letter was mailed to the District mailing list inviting the public to comment on the Plan and possible changes to it.

A total of 60 letters were received from the public. Comments and recommendations ranged widely - see Appendix C of this report for a discussion of public input.

Amendments were also submitted by BLM district staff. Staff proposals were generally directed at errors in the mapping of multiple use classes and other area boundaries, clarification of the text, and changes which are needed to improve manageability.

The proposed amendments were reviewed by the district management to determine which ones met the criteria for amendment at this time. Criteria included the following:

1. Does the information represent a new issue? The supporting rationale must show that there is a complete set of circumstances around a central problem or program that was not considered in the approved Plan decision process.

2. Does the information represent new and significant data on an existing issue? The supporting rationale must show that the information is new, was not considered during the previous decisions, and would now change previous decisions.

3. Does the information indicate a formal change in State or local government or other agency plans? The supporting rationale must show that state- or local government-approved plans, or major official changes in other Federal agency plans or policies made since the Desert Plan's approval, would affect Plan decisions.

4. Does the information indicate a change in legal or regulatory mandate? The supporting rationale must show that Federal statute, regulation, or formal policy would change or otherwise affect Plan decisions when applied to the Desert Plan.

Those proposals which met one or more of the above criteria were accepted for consideration as candidate amendments to the Plan and are included in this Environmental Assessment (EA) as "Category 1" amendments. If, as a result of this assessment, it is found that one or more of the proposed amendments would have a significant impact on resources of the desert, then those specific candidates are treated as "Category 2" amendments requiring an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Those proposals rejected from consideration at this time are listed and discussed in Appendix D of this report. The reasons for their rejection are also provided.

A management team comprised of the District Manager, Assistant District Manager, and the five Resource Area Managers reviewed the proposed amendments to determine which ones meet the above criteria for consideration.

The recommendations of staff were reviewed by the California Desert District Advisory Council at their first meeting, November 13-14, 1981. A subcommittee was formed to review the proposed amendments in depth and provide input to the District Manager as to which amendments should be considered at this time, based on the selection criteria outlined above.

The Council generally concurred with staff recommendations. However, as a result of the subcommittee's meeting (December 10, 1981), three additional proposed amendments were brought forward for consideration at this time. The number of candidate amendments (those accepted for consideration) increased to 27 out of a total of 51 proposals.

This Environmental Assessment will be available for public review and comment until March 16, 1982. All comments received from organizations, individuals, other agencies, and local government will be summarized by staff and reviewed by the Desert District Advisory Council at their March 26-27 meeting in El Centro. The decisions by the District Manager, with concurrence by the State Director, will be published around the first week in April. The decision options are to (a) approve the amendment (b) reject the amendment (c) "hold" for additional input (d) place amendment in Category II because of significant impacts to the environment. This will require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

This report is divided into four chapters and four appendices.

Chapter I, INTRODUCTION, reviews the amendment process.

Chapter II, DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENTS AND ALTERNATIVES, (see Table #1) describes each amendment and the reasons given by the applicant for the change. A discussion of alternatives for evaluating cumulative impacts considered by staff is also included in this chapter.

Chapter III, AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT, provides references to sections in the Desert Plan and the Plan EIS describing the human environment affected by each candidate amendment.

Chapter IV, ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES, discusses potential impacts on desert resources that could be expected under two possible conditions: (1) if the amendment is approved and (2) if the amendment is rejected. This chapter also discusses cumulative effects in the Desert Plan, assuming that all of the candidates are approved.

Appendix A, MAPS, contains a detailed map relating to each site-specific amendment.

Appendix B, TEXT CHANGES, provides amendment changes involving guidelines, plan elements, and other non-site specific proposals.

Appendix C, PUBLIC INPUT, contains a brief overview of public comments received during review of the Final Desert Plan.

Appendix D, AMENDMENTS NOT CONSIDERED, describes the proposed amendments which were rejected and reasons for their rejection.

CHAPTER II

DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENTS AND ALTERNATIVES

A. Description of Candidate Amendments

Table 1, provides a descriptive overview of the proposed amendments. The "Map" column refers to the detailed maps located in Appendix A of this report. These maps show proposed site specific changes to the plan. The "Description" column describes the amendment and reasons given by the proponent for the change. (Note: the P. U. number is the number of the Planning Unit delineated in the "Multiple Use Class" map located in the back cover of the Desert Plan.)

The "Resources Affected" column refers to those resources which may be affected if the amendment is approved.

B. Alternatives Considered

Each amendment is considered individually as being either accepted or rejected. The rejection of an amendment is comparable to the "No Action" alternative of the Desert Plan.

The cumulative effect of accepting all of the proposed amendments has been evaluated and compared with "No Action", i.e., no change to the Plan alternatives. The results of the cumulative impact evaluation is discussed in Chapter IV of this report.

TABLE 1. AMENDMENTS CONSIDERED

No.	Map	Description	Resources Affected
		MULTIPLE-USE CLASSES	
1	D	Western edge of Planning Unit 34-a should be changed from "L" to "M". Sand and gravel mining is a past and present use in this area. (P.U. 34, Barstow R.A.) BLM, Barstow RA.	Area: 1630 Ac Visual Resources - good Minerals - sand and gravel
2	D	Change from "L" to "M" a small mining area which intrudes into the Soda Mountains. The area has been mined in the past and is proposed by Cal Trans for future sand and gravel extraction. (P.U. 56, Barstow R.A.) Barstow RA - BLM.	Area: 1040 Ac Wildlife - bighorn (transient) Visual Resources - good Cultural Resources - high Minerals - sand & gravel
3	B	Rainbow Basin/Owl Canyon - area of ACEC #39 - change from "M" to "L". Designation of this area as Class "M" was an error. Class "L" was intended for protection of sensitive resources. (P.U. 32, Barstow R.A.) BLM - Barstow RA.	Area: 640 Ac Wildlife - Mojave Ground Squirr Desert Tortoise (HMP W-21) Cultural Values - very high Native American Values - very high
4	E	Change Silver Mountain Vicinity from "M" to "I" Present intensive mining operations in the vicinity make Class "I" appropriate for this area. (P.U. 35, Barstow R.A.) R. Stanfield, Hesperia.	Area: 3110 Ac Minerals - active mining Cultural - high

TABLE 1. AMENDMENTS CONSIDERED continued

No.	Map	Description	Resources Affected
5	E	Change Turtle Valley area from "L" to "M" Class "M" is a more appropriate designation for this area due to existing widespread vehicle use and unmanageability as Class "L". (P.U. 36, Barstow R.A.) BLM - Barstow RA.	Area: 12,375 Ac Soils - impacts of ORVs Wildlife - tortoise, raptors Grazing - ORV impacts on forage Recreation - Increase ORV opportunities, manageability Visual Resources - moderate Public Lands - trespass of ORVs
6	F	Change small tract area adjacent to and south of Highway 247 in P.U. 41 from "L" to "unclassified." Class guidelines are incompatible with present and future uses of private land which makes up over 50% of this area. (P.U. 41, Barstow R.A.) BLM, Barstow RA.	Area: 2,670 Ac Visual Resources - good Public Lands - potential sale or exchange
7	F	Change a small area of public land, adjacent to and northeast of Highway 247 from Class "M" to "unclassified." Separation of this small area from other public lands make management impractical. (P.U. 40, Barstow R.A.) BLM, Barstow RA.	Area: 2,270 Ac Vegetation - creosote clones Visual Resources - fair to good, floral displays Public Lands - potential sale or exchange
8	G	Reevaluate boundary of WSA 305, 328 to eliminate conflicting uses. Change area from Class C to Class M. Freshly graded dirt roads are found in the southeast corner of the Class "C" area. (P.U. 79, Needles R.A.) Phillips Petroleum Co.	Area: approximately 9,000 acres Wilderness - recommended WSA 305, 328 Visual Resources - good Minerals - eight mining claims

TABLE 1. AMENDMENTS CONSIDERED (continued)

No.	Map	Description	Resources Affected
9	J	Change the Hess Mining area from "" to "M" This area has historically been an intensive mining site. This use is expected to continue. (P.U. 101, El Centro R.A.) BLM, El Centro RA.	Area: 1,650 Ac Visual Resources - good Minerals - historical mining area
10	J	Change area surrounding Glamis store from "C" to "I". This area has been open to ORV activity since establishment of the Interim Critical Management Plan. (P.U. 103, El Centro R.A.) BLM, El Centro RA.	Area: 1,000 Ac MV Access - traditional ORV area
		ACECs	
11	E	Silver Mountain Vicinity ACEC (#44) should be deleted or reduced in size. Many old mines and mineral claims have been reactivated in this area. (P.U. 35, Barstow R.A.) R. Stanfield, Hesperia.	Area: 1,802 Ac Cultural - high
12	B	Harper Dry Lake ACEC (#37) Should be reduced from 1760 to 480 Ac. This change will continue protection of sensitive marsh habitat while excluding from ACEC protection the surrounding playa beds. (P.U. 28, Barstow R.A.) BLM, Barstow RA.	Area: 1,280 Ac Wildlife - riparian habitat
13	C	Goldstone ACEC (#27) should be deleted. Resource values are not significant enough to warrant management as an ACEC. Present and future mining activities will interfere with resource protection. (P.U. 32, Barstow R.A.) BLM, Barstow RA.	Area: 2,600 Ac Cultural - mining remains Grazing - Goldstone allotment

TABLE 1. AMENDMENTS CONSIDERED continued

No.	Map	Description	Resources Affected
14	E	Designate a new ACEC near Helendale to protect habitat of "Sclerocactus polyancistrus". This would preserve this rare and endangered plant species and allow continued research, while also protecting the desert tortoise which is present in large numbers. Richard W. May. See Appendix B.	Area: Undecided - at least 640 Ac Vegetation - rare cactus Public Lands - 43% private land
15	H	Corn Springs ACEC (#56) should be reduced from 5568 Ac to 2720 Ac. The additional acreage is unnecessary and does not contain significant sensitive resource values. (P.U. 98, Indio R.A.) BLM, Indio RA.	Area: 2,850 Ac Wildlife - riparian habitat; bighorn, tortoise, golden eagle Visual Resources - excellent Cultural Resources - high values Native American Values - Serrano/ Cahuilla Indians
16	H	Sidewinder Well ACEC (#54) should be deleted. The resource values are not significant enough to warrant management as an ACEC. (P.U. 90, Indio R.A.) BLM, Indio RA.	Area: 4,940 Ac Cultural Resources - lower than projected
17	I	Mountain Pass ACEC (#30) should be deleted. See Appendix B. Although this ACEC was designed to protect historic mining remains, the public lands at this site contain almost no significant archeological resources. (P.U. 65, Needles R.A.) Union Molycorp, Inc.	Area: 1,360 Ac Vegetation - potential for RT&E plants Cultural Resources - on private land Geological Resources - redelineate ACEC boundaries

TABLE 1. AMENDMENTS CONSIDERED (continued)

No.	Map	Description	Resources Affected
		GRAZING ELEMENT	
18	—	Deep Springs Allotment - increase AUMs (annual unit months) by 10%. Range condition has been reevaluated to "good" instead of "poor." Therefore, reduction of AUMs authorized in this allotment was an error. (P.U. 1, Ridgecrest R.A.) BLM, Ridgecrest RA.	Area: 43,000 Ac Wildlife - riparian habitats Grazing - maintain current AUMs
19	A	Adjust boundary between Tunawee and Lacey-Cactus-McCloud Grazing allotments, to reflect the historic area of uses. This will add 4,978 acres to Tunawee allotment and 280 AUMs to the total AUMs. Because of a 25% reduction in carrying capacity within the Tunawee allotment for improvement of condition, only 209 AUMs will be authorized. BLM, Ridgecrest area.	Area: 4,978 Ac Vegetation - one Federally-listed plant species Wildlife - Mojave ground squirrel Grazing - increase Tunawee allotment by 280 AUMs
20	—	Jean Lake Allotment - increase AUMs from 251 to 298. Factors concerning water availability and slope exclusions which were used in AUM calculations were in error. (Needles R.A.) BLM, Needles RA.	Area: 9,600 Ac Wildlife - tortoise crucial habitat Grazing - re-allow 47 AUMs
21	L	Lazy Daisy Allotment - change range type from ephemal to ephemeral/perennial; amend boundaries of allotment: reauthorize 3,192 AUMs. The Plan has placed an economic hardship on the operator through substantial reduction of his former authorization. (P.U. 75, 76, 82, 88, Needles RA). BLM, Needles RA.	Area: approx. 100.000 Ac Soils - compaction near watering sites Grazing - historic use Wildlife - bighorn/desert tortoise

No.	Map	Description	Resources Affected
22	K	Add new allotment, Chemehuevi - #61, ephemeral range for cattle only, with allocation to be determined annually. Native Americans have been grazing this area for over 40 years. (P. U. 78, 83, 84, Needles R.A.) BLM, Needles RA.	Area: 118,000 Ac Soils - compaction Vegetation - crucifixion thorn assemblage Grazing - historic use Native Americans - economic concerns Wildlife - desert tortoise
23	–	Amend wording for ephermal grazing regulations to distinguish between ephemeral use by sheep and cows. See Appendix B. The criteria in the Plan for determining turnout for livestock on ephermal ranges was designed for sheep. New language is needed to identify policy for cattle grazing on both ephemeral and ephemeral/ perennial allotments. See attachment. BLM.	Wildlife - impact on habitats Grazing - management conflicts
		WILD HORSE / BURRO ELEMENT	
24	–	Update Desert Plan to reflect feral burro management at the Naval Weapons Center. The Desert Plan should reflect the direction of burro management within the Centennial Valley Herd Manaagement Area within which the Naval Weapons Center is the Major Land Manager. (Ridgecrest R.A.). Naval Weapons Center.	Wildlife - impact on habitats Wild Horses and Burros - burro reduction in two herd management areas
		ENERGY / UTILITY ELEMENT	
25	M	Designate a communication site in Class "L" for a limited military facility. The site is situated near the Fort Irwin National Training Center (P.U. 54, Barstow R.A.) US Army Corps of Engineers.	Area: 1 Ac No sensitive resources

TABLE 1. AMENDMENTS CONSIDERED (continued)

No.	Map	Description	Resources Affected
		MULTIPLE-USE GUIDELINES	
26	–	Amend Multiple Use Class Guidelines to allow sand and gravel sales in Class "L" after 30 days public review of an EA, rather than requiring an EIS if over 5 acres. See App. B. Time and effort in processing an EIS cannot be justified. BLM, Barstow RA.	Minerals - sand and gravel
27	–	Reduce requirement in Class L from 60 days to 30 days for public review of Plans of Operation for mineral exploration and development. This will reduce amount of time required for agency response to applicants and still allow for some public exposure of mining plans of operation in Class L. San Bernardino County Economic Development Department.	Minerals - less delay for miners Social/Political - concern over mining in Class L and need for comment time

C. Other Alternatives Considered and Rejected

Two alternatives similar to the "Use" and "Protection" alternatives considered in the Draft Desert Plan were constructed for the purpose of comparing cumulative impacts on resources and on the Plan.

After a preliminary analysis, these two alternatives were rejected because the cumulative effects on both the Plan and desert resources were not significant.

Chapter III

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The Affected Environment refers specifically to that limited area which may be impacted by the proposed amendment. In some amendments this may be extremely limited; in others it may apply to the entire California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA).

Two sources of information have been found which discuss the affected environments adequately for this document:

1. The California Desert Conservation Area Plan, 1980.

2. The Appendices for the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Plan, CDCA, September 1980.

Abbreviations will be used in identifying references for this section, as follows:

a. California Desert Conservation Area Plan, 1980: CDCA Plan
b. Maps contained in this Plan will be identified by their number and title. For example, the map on Wild Horses and Burros, Map No. 8: Map #8, Burros.
c. Appendices to the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Plan for California Desert Conservation Area will be identified by the letter of the volume and the number of the appendix. For example, the appendix Summary of Decisions of Resource Values is Appendix II, Volume A and would be abbreviated as Appendix A II.

Following are amendments to be considered:

Amendment#	Title	References
1 (P.U. 34, Barstow RA)	Change a small mining area in P.U. 34 from "L" to "M."	CDCA Plan 1980: Map #7, Wilderness; Appendix A II: Maps p. 243, 244; Appendix B III, p. 371-376

Amendment#	Title	References
2 (P.U. 56, Barstow RA)	Change a small area at the southern end of the Soda Mountains from Class L to Class M.	CDCA Plan 1980: Map #7, Wilderness; Appendix A II: Maps p. 243, 244; Appendix B III, p. 371-376
3 (P.U. 32, Barstow RA)	Change the eastern portion of Rainbow Basin/Owl Canyon ACEC (#39) from "M" to "L".	CDCA Plan, 1980, Table 2, p. 33, Map Key W-21; Map #3, Wildlife Mgmt.; Map #17, ACECs; Appendix A II: p. 231 - 233, Maps p. 237, 238; Appendix C IV, P. 29, 30. .
4 (P.U. 35, Barstow RA)	Change Silver Mountain Vicinity from "M" to "I".	CDCA Plan 1980: Map 12, Minerals; Map #17, ACECs; Appendix A II: pp. 245, 246, Maps p. 249, 250.
5 (P.U. 36, Barstow RA)	Change an area in Turtle Valley from "L" to "M".	CDCA Plan 1980: Table 2, p. 33, Map Key W-23; Map #3, Wildlife Mgmt.; Map #9, Grazing; Appendix A II: p. 246, 247 Maps p. 249, 250
6 (P.U. 41, Barstow RA)	Change small tract area in P.U. 41, adjacent to and south of Highway 247, from "L" to "unclassified."	Appendix A II: p. 262-263; Maps p. 265, 266.
7 (P.U. 40, Barstow RA)	Change an area northeast of Highway 247 in the Johnson Valley from Class "M" to "unclassified."	CDCA Plan 1980: Map #6, Unusual Plant Assemblages; Appendix A II: p. 261, 262, Maps p. 265, 266.
8 (P.U. 79, 80, 88, Needles RA)	Reevaluate boundaries of WSAs 305 and 328 to eliminate conflicting uses. Change from "C" to "M".	CDCA Plan, 1980: Map #7, Wilderness. Appendix A II: Maps. p. 397-398, 403-404, 427-428; Appendix B pp. 539-544, 583-587.

Amendment#	Title	References
9 (P.U. 101, El Centro RA)	Extend the Class M area in P.U. 101 westward to include the area surrounding the Hess Mine.	CDCA Plan 1980: Map #7, Wilderness; Appendix A II, p. 477, 478; Appendix B III, p. 649-653
10 (P.U. 101, El Centro RA)	Correct boundary of Class I area in P.U. 103 to include the Glamis Store and its immediate vicinity.	CDCA Plan 1980: Map #7, Wilderness; Appendix A II: p. 483-485 Maps p. 487,488; Appendix B III: p. 654-661.
11 (P.U. 35, Barstow RA)	Delete ACEC #44, presently designated the Silver Mountain vicinity.	CDCA Plan 1980: Map #17, ACECs; Table 15, p. 126. Appendix A II: p. 245, 246, Maps p. 249, 250; Appendix C IV: p. 33, 34.
12	Reduce area of Harper Dry Lake ACEC (#37) from 1760 to 480 acres.	CDCA Plan 1980: Map #3, Wildlife Mgmt; Map #17, ACEC; Table 15, p. 126; Table 2, p. 33 Map Key W-21; Appendix A II: p. 219-220; Appendix C IV: p. 28.
13 (P.U. 32, Barstow RA)	Delete ACEC #27, Goldstone.	CDCA Plan 1980: Table 15, P. 126 and Map #17, ACEC; Appendix A II: p. 231-233; Maps p. 237, 238. Appendix C IV: p. 20, 21.
14 (P.U. 35, Barstow RA)	Designate a new ACEC near Helendale to protect habitat of Sclerocactus polyancistrus.	Appendix A II: p. 245, 246, Maps p. 249, 250.
15 (P.U. 98, Indio RA)	Reduce the area of Corn Springs ACEC (#56) from 5568 to 2720 acres.	CDCA Plan 1980: Table 15 p. 126 & Map #17, ACECs+ Table 2, p. 33, Map Key 56, Map #3, Wildlife Mgmt.; Appendix A II: p. 457-459, Maps p. 461, 462; Appendix C IV: p. 42, 43.

Amendment#	Title	References
16 (P.U. 90, Indio RA)	Drop Sidewinder Well ACEC (#54) from ACEC status.	Appendix A II: p. 429-431 and Maps p. 433-434; Appendix C IV: p. 41.
17 (P.U. 67, Needles RA)	Revise the Mountain Pass ACEC (#30) to exclude historical mining sites.	CDCA Plan 1980: Map #5, Rare Plants; Appendix A II: p. 348-350 & Maps p. 351-352; Appendix C IV: p. 22-23.
18 (P.U. 1,3, 4, Ridgecrest RA)	Increase AUMs in Deep Springs Allotment by 232.	CDCA Plan 1980: Table 2, p. 33, Map Key W-8, W-11, W-12; Map #3, Wildlife Mgmt.; Table 6, p. 75; Map #9, Livestock Grazing Allotments; Appendix A II: p. 121 - 123, 125 - 128, and Maps p. 131 - 132.
19 (P.U. 16, 17, Ridgecrest RA)	Adjust boundary between Tunawee and Lacey-Cactus-McCloud Grazing Allotments to reflect the historic areas of uses.	CDCA Plan 1980: Table 5, Rare Plants; Table 6, p.76; Map #9, Livestock Grazing Allotments; Appendix A II: p. 165-169, Maps p. 171, 172
20 (P.U. 68, Needles RA)	Increase Jean Lake Allotment AUMs from 251 to 298.	CDCA Plan 1980: Table 2, [illegible]5; Map Key W-26; Map #3, Wild[illegible] life Mgmt., Map #9, Livestock Grazing Allotments. Appendix A II: p. 353; Map, p. 360.
21 (P.U. 75, 76, 82, 83 Needles RA)	Change Lazy Daisy Allotment range type from ephemeral to ephemeral/perennial; amend boundaries of allotments; reauthorize 3192 AUMs	CDCA Plan 1980: Table 6, p. 77; Map #9, Livestock Grazing Allotments; Table 2, p. 34, Map Key W-35; Map #3, Wildlife Mgmt.; Appendix A II: p. 379-380, 383-384, 409-410, 413-414; Maps, p. 381-382, 387-388, 411-412, 415-416.
22 P.U. 78, 83, 84 (Needles RA)	Add new grazing allotment, Chemehuevi #61, for ephemeral use by cattle only.	CDCA Plan 1980: Map #6, Unusual Plant Assemblages; Map #3, Wildlife Mgmt.; Table 2, p. 34, Map Key W-35; Appendix A II: p. 389-394.
23 (CDD)	Amend wording in Grazing Element to distinguish between ephemeral use by sheep and cattle.	CDCA Plan: p. 69, 70; Appendix F XIII: p. 47-51.

Amendment#	Title	References
24 (Ridgecrest RA)	Update Wild Horse and Burro Element to reflect change in burro management policy at the Naval Weapons Center.	CDCA Plan 1980: Table 5, p. 61 and Map #8, Wild Horse and Burro Management Area.
25 (CDD)	Designate a communications right-of-way site in P.U. 54 adjacent to eastern boundary of Fort Irwin.	CDCA Plan 1980: p. 116; Map #16, Energy Production and Utility Corridors; Table 1, p. 16, Communication Sites.
26 (CDD)	Change the multiple use class guidelines for saleable minerals (sand and gravel) in Class L to require an environmental assessment followed by a 60-day public review period.	CDCA Plan 1980: Table 1, p. 19, "Saleable Minerals," Class "L".
27 (CDD)	Reduce requirement in Class "L" from 60 days to 30 days for public review of Plans of Operation for mineral exploration and development.	CDCA Plan 1980: Table 1, p. 18, locatable minerals, Class "L".

CHAPTER IV

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Section A of this chapter describes the probable environmental consequences or effect of each amendment on both sensitive resources and uses. The evaluation was conducted by district staff resource specialists. Their conclusions are based on resource data used to develop the Desert Plan, and their professional judgement. The evaluation includes two possible conditions (1) effect on the resource if the amendment is accepted or approved and (2) the effect if the amendment is rejected, i.e., no change to the Desert Plan.

Table 2 provides a summary of environmental impacts. The symbol "x" means that the amendment would have a positive impact on the resource. For example, an increase in grazing forage available for livestock is a positive impact on livestock production. A minus sign (-) means that the amendment would have a negative impact on the resource. In this instance, the increased use of forage could have a negative impact on wildlife. The nature and degree of impact is not indicated in the table.

Section B of this chapter discusses the cumulative effects. It is assumed that all of the amendments are approved.

CANDIDATE AMENDMENTS SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

Table 2

Amendment No	Amendment	RESOURCES								USES					IMPACTS
		Soil Air Water	Vegetation	Wildlife	Horses/ Burros	Cultural	Native Americans	Visual Resources	Wilderness	Grazing	Recreation	Lands	Energy/ Minerals	Social/ Political	Positive X Negative —
1	Planning Unit 34b							—					X		
2	Soda Mountain Area					—		—					X		
3	Rainbow Basin			X		X	X								
4	Silver Mountain Area					—									
5	Turtle Valley Area	—		—				—		—	X				
6	Planning Unit 41 South of Hwy 247							—				X			
7	Planning Unit 40 Northeast of Hwy 247							—				X			
8	WSAs 105 and 128							—	—				X		
9	Hess Mining Area							—					X		
10	Glamis Store Area										X				
11	ACEC 44 (Silver Mt.)					—									
12	ACEC 37 (Harper Lake)														
13	ACEC 27 (Goldstone)														
14	New ACEC (Helendale)		X									—			
15	ACEC 56 (Corn Springs)														
16	ACEC 54 (Sidewinder)														
17	ACEC 30 (Mountain Pass)		—												
18	Deep Springs Allotment			—						X					
19	Tinnawee Allotment		X	—						X					
20	Jean Lake Allotment			—						X					
21	Lazy Daisy Allotment	—		—						X					
22	Chemehuevi Allotment	—		—			X			X					
23	Change/Grazing Element			—											
24	Burro Management NWC			X	—										
25	Communications Site														
26	Guidelines Saleable Minerals												X		
27	Guidelines Locatable Minerals												X	—	

A. Environmental Consequences of Each Amendment

Amendment One

Change a small mining area in P.U. 34 from Class L to Class M. (Map D)

Visual Resources

Accept - Visual quality in this area is rated "good." Changing from Class L to Class M would permit higher and more intense uses which might adversely affect visual resources. The allowable contrast between existing and proposed surface conditions would be increased, possibly lowering the scenic qualities.

Reject - No effect.

Minerals

Accept - This area has been mined historically for sand and gravel and is already disturbed. Changing from Class L to Class M would remove the requirements for an EIS, thus making this area available in a faster and more cost effective manner and ending a "de facto withdrawal." Resource values in the subject area are fully protected under the mining regulations 43 CFR 3600.

The potential for mineral trespass could be decreased because of easier legal accessibility, hence protecting resource values in other non-permitted areas. Also, the Barstow Resource Area staff would be able to concentrate on other cases in environmentally significant areas.

Reject - The possibility of continued mineral trespass would exist. In addition, further costs and delays to users would result from the EIS requirements, and there would be a loss of BLM field capability to process cases in more sensitive areas.

Amendment Two

Change a small area at the southern end of the Soda Mountains from Class L to Class M. (Map D)

Wildlife

Accept - The Soda Mountains provide habitat for transient bighorn sheep moving between the Cady and Avawatz Mountains. There is no permanent or year-round bighorn use in the Soda Mountains. Acceptance of this amendment, and the possible increased activity at lower elevations, would not severely impact bighorn sheep in this area.

Reject - No effect.

Visual Resources

Accept - Visual quality in this area is rated "good." Acceptance of this amendment might adversely affect visual resources, since Class M generally allows for higher and more intense forms of use than Class L. These uses might increase the contrast between existing and proposed surface conditions and degrade scenic qualities.

Reject - No effect

Cultural Resources

Accept - A change from Class L to Class M would permit additional uses which could threaten cultural resources. The requirement for an Environmental Assessment prior to any action would provide a means of assessing possible impacts and stipulating necessary protective mitigation measures.

Reject - No effect.

Minerals

Accept - This area has historically been mined for sand and gravel and is already disturbed. Changing from Class L to Class M would remove the requirement for an EIS, thus making this area again available in a faster and more cost effective manner, and ending a "de facto withdrawal." Resource values would be fully protected under 43 CFR 3600.

The potential for mineral trespass could be decreased because of easier legal accessibility, hence protecting resource values in other non-permitted areas. Also, the Barstow Resource Area staff would be able to concentrate on other cases in environmentally significant areas.

Reject - The possibility of continued mineral trespass would exist. In addition, further costs and delays to users would result from the EIS requirement, and there would be a loss of BLM field capability to process cases in more sensitive areas.

Amendment Three

Change the eastern portion of Rainbow Basin/Owl Canyon ACEC (#39) from Class M to Class L.

Wildlife

Accept - Changing to the more restrictive Class L could have a positive effect on the maintenance of desert tortoise and Mohave ground squirrel populations in this location. This area is included in the Western Mojave Desert Habitat Management Area for which the primary goals are to preserve tortoise and ground squirrel habitat by minimizing conflicting uses.

Reject - More intense uses and possible impacts to wildlife would be permitted.

Cultural/Native American Resources

Accept - The change from M to L would ensure enhanced protection for the cultural resources in the ACEC by further restricting ground-disturbing activities.
The Native American resources in the area would also be additionally protected.

Reject - Activities permitted in Class M would threaten sensitive Cultural and Native American resources.

Amendment Four

Change Silver Mountain vicinity from Class M to Class I (Map E)

Cultural/Historic Resources

Accept - The early gold mining activity (circa 1870s) has historic significance and has been designated as ACEC #44. It is proposed that this ACEC be deleted (see Amendment 11). If both proposed amendments occur, i.e., delete the ACEC and change to Class I (intensive use), the historic remains could be adversely affected. If, however, the ACEC is retained, change in classification of the area from M to I would have little effect on historic values.

Reject - No effect.

Amendment Five

Change an area in Turtle Valley from Class L to Class M. (Map E)

Soils

Accept - Large amounts of off-road vehicle activity have already impacted soils in this area. Some areas with compacted soil or substantially accelerated erosion have reduced capacity for plant growth. Some compensation for decreased productivity in impacted areas might result from increased productivity in locations which receive increased runoff from the impacted sites. Approval of the amendment may result in a greater rate of increase in the soil impacts than would otherwise occur.

Reject - A slower rate of increase in soil impacts by ORV's as discussed above would probably result.

Wildlife

Accept - The area partially overlaps the southeast corner of the West Mojave Crucial Tortoise Habitat Area. Several known raptor eyries are also present. Recreational use would impact wildlife habitat to an unknown degree.

Reject - No impact

Livestock Grazing

Accept - Increased ORV use of the region would cause more management problems for sheep grazing during the two-to-four months of spring use. Increased ORV use would impact vegetation, leaving less forage for grazing.

Reject - Less ORV use would ease management problems for sheep grazing in the two-to-four months of spring use. Less ORV use would occur, allowing more forage for grazing.

Recreation

Accept - Experiences for motorized users would be enhanced, as Class M provides greater flexibility in route selection and use, as well as increased opportunities for competitive and other special recreation events.

Reject - If this area remains Class L, the route approval process could reduce opportunities for motorized vehicle recreation.

Visual Resources

Accept - Visual quality in this area is rated "Moderate." Acceptance of this amendment would result in gradual degradation of scenic values due to the uses permitted in Class M.

Reject - No impact.

Public Lands

Accept - The impacts of accepting this amendment are considered to be slight. An increase in the number of trespass occurrences on private lands by off-road-vehicles is to be expected.

Reject - No effect.

Amendment Six

Change a "small tract" area in P. U. 41, adjacent to and south of Highway 247, from Class L to "Unclassified." (Map F)

Visual Resources

Accept - Visual quality is rated "good." There presently are excellent floral displays along Highway 247, which was found eligible as a State Scenic Route. Any of several uses could cause increased surface disturbance, damage the floral displays, and generally reduce the scenic quality. These uses would probably increase in the absence of Class L management.

Reject - No change

Public Lands

Accept - Management of this area under Class L guidelines is unfeasible, since over 50 percent of the land is in private ownership. Conversion of this land to unclassified status would indicate that, at some time in the future, the Bureau will dispose of this land in such a manner as to maintain consistency with other lands in the immediate vicinity. The Bureau's potential for land exchange in this area would be enhanced.

Reject - No change.

Amendment Seven

Change an area northeast of Highway 247 in the Johnson Valley (P. U. 40) from Class M to Unclassified. (Map F)

Vegetation

Accept - The Johnson Valley/Lucerne Valley Creosote Bush Clones Unusual Plant Assemblage (UPA) extends into this area. The plants in the subject area are small-to-medium size and make up a very minor portion of the UPA. The impact of changing from Class M to unclassified land status is expected to be minimal. If land exchanges are proposed in the future, the impact of each exchange will have to be examined individually to determine the effect on the UPA.

Reject - No effect.

Visual Resources

Accept - Visual quality is rated "Fair." Outstanding floral displays occur along Highway 247, a proposed State Scenic Route. Future conversion of the land to private uses through sale or exchange might permit increased surface disturbance, which could result in reduced floral display quality and extent. An overall reduction in scenic quality would be the result.

Reject - No effect.

Public Lands

Accept - The Bureau 's potential for land exchanges in this area would be enhanced.

Reject - No effect.

Amendment Eight

Reevaluate boundaries of WSAs 305 and 328 to eliminate conflicting uses. Change Multiple Use Class from C to M. (Map G)

Wilderness

Accept - Little or no significant effect on the wilderness values of this area would be expected in the short term. In the long term, if energy development occurs in this area and/or mining activity increases, then wilderness values could be significantly impaired.

Reject - No effect.

Visual Resources

Accept - Visual resources are rated as "Good." If mineral and/or geothermal development occurred, some loss of scenic quality would be expected. These operations would present a contrast and intrusion into an essentially natural landscape.

Reject - No effect.

Energy/Minerals

Accept - If this amendment is accepted, any resource that has been identified could be developed consistent with environmental policies, regulations and laws. This would represent an opportunity to develop an alternate energy source to relieve dependence upon foreign sources of energy supplies. The Treasury would receive additional income through royalties upon production and lease rentals.

Other types of mineral production (mining claims, etc.) would be permitted, subject to the above limitations. Accepting this amendment would have positive impacts upon mineral production.

Reject - If the amendment is rejected, any identified resource could possibly not be developed due to the wilderness impairment criteria. This would represent a loss of any monetary investments which have already been made in exploring the area, as well as a loss to the nation of an opportunity to develop an alternate energy source to relieve dependence upon foreign energy supplies.

The impairment criteria would probably preclude any other mineral production (from mining claims under the 3802 regulations, etc.) since no valid existing rights apparently exist.

Rejecting this amendment would have significant negative impacts upon possible mineral production.

Amendment Nine

Extend the Class M area in P. U. 101 westward to include the area surrounding the Hess Mine. (Map D)

Visual Resources

Accept - Visual quality is rated "Good." Visual resource values might be adversely affected, as Class M generally permits higher and more intense forms of use. Allowable contrast between existing and proposed surface conditions would be increased, possibly resulting in lowered scenic quality.

Reject - No effect.

Minerals

Accept - The vicinity of the Hess mine historicaly has been an intensive mining area. A Class M designation would encourage continued mineral exploration and development and would reduce the length of time required to process mining plans from the present 80 - 90 days to 30 days.

Reject - Continued delay in mining plan processing and increased processing costs would result.

Amendment Ten

Correct boundary of Class I area in P. U. 103 to include the Glamis Store and its immediate vicinity. (Map J)

Motorized-Vehicle Access

Accept - This area has been open to vehicles for several years, as prescribed by the Interim Critical Management Plan. This amendment would bring the multiple use class map into conformance with existing management and intensive recreation uses. No changes in impacts already existing in this area should result.

Reject - Great inconvenience to recreational users of this small area could result. A considerable increase in the number of management personnel to enforce new vehicle access restrictions might be required.

Amendment Eleven

Delete ACEC #44, presently designated the Silver Mountain vicinity ACEC (P. U. 35, 1802 acres) (Map E)

Cultural Resources

Accept - This is one of the early gold mining areas in the California desert, circa 1870. The historical importance of the mining district is tied to the Oro Grande mill site located near Oro Grande on the Mojave River. Significance of the Oro Grande mine and the remains of surrounding mining sites is above average compared with other early mining locations in the desert. The area is presently protected from the public by a resident miner.

Deletion of the ACEC designation, would not, at this time, have a significant effect on the historic remains because of the protection presently provided by the resident. This could change if he for some reason were no longer providing this service.

Reject - Added protection to this site would be achieved. A continuing level of BLM protection would be assured in the event the resident miner stopped providing protection.

Amendment Twelve

Reduce area of Harper Lake ACEC (#37) from 1,760 to 480 acres. (Map B)

Wildlife

Accept - This ACEC was nominated for wildlife protection, specifically for the protective management of wetland habitat located along the playa shoreline. Wildlife protection would remain essentially unaffected since the proposed new boundary encompasses all marsh habitat and adjacent saltbush shrubland, as well as a buffer zone of 100 yards of playa bed. Remaining lands within the original ACEC would be adequately protected by Class L guidelines.

Reject - A wasteful allocation of BLM resources would result from creating, implementing and monitoring an ACEC plan for an area containing no resource values worthy of ACEC protection.

Amendment Thirteen

Delete ACEC #27, Goldstone (P. U. 32) (Map C)

Cultural Resources

Accept - This area was nominated as an ACEC to protect the historic mining town of Goldstone. At the time of nomination several wooden structures were still standing. Since that time most of the structures have been destroyed as the result of new mining activity. Also, current research indicates that most of the land is private and is not under the jurisdiction of the US government. The deletion of the Goldstone ACEC would not cause a loss of cultural resources but would allow attention to be placed on areas of public land having cultural resources in need of protection.

Reject - A wasteful allocation of BLM resources would result from creating, implementing, and monitoring an ACEC plan for an area containing no resource values worthy of ACEC protection.

Livestock Grazing

Accept - Grazing in the allotment which encompasses this area would not be affected by approval of the amendment.

Reject - No effect.

Amendment Fourteen

Establish a new ACEC near Helendale to protect habitat of Sclerocactus polyancistrus. (Map E, see Appendix B for ACEC Management Prescriptions)

Vegetation

Accept - Protection of the habitat of the endangered plant species Sclerocactus polyancistrus would be accomplished by controlling vehicle use. This activity is moderate at present, but the potential for increase is high, with the possibility that the habitat could be ruined.

Other management prescriptions would also aid in protection. These include fencing of selected populations, regular site monitoring, and acquisition of private lands through exchange, or the establishment of cooperative agreements.

Reject - The habitat would remain unprotected from vehicle-aided depredation and inadvertant damage to, or loss of, plants. The plants would also be subject to illegal collecting.

Public Lands

Accept - The proposed ACEC is in an area which contains 43 percent privately owned land. The Bureau has had previous land exchanges here. Approval of the amendment would eliminate the potential of exchanging public lands in the ACEC for private lands.

Reject - The potential for continued exchange of BLM lands in this vicinity would remain.

Amendment Fifteen

Reduce the area of Corn Springs ACEC (#56) from 5,568 to 2,720 acres. (P. U. 98). (Map H)

Wildlife

Accept - Reduction of the acreage of the ACEC would have essentially no effect on wildlife. The deleted areas are outside of the major riparian zones and palm oasis. The slopes deleted on the northern and southern edges are not subject to severe impacts. The wash area west of Aztec Well which is proposed for deletion does not contain prime riparian vegetation.

Reject - No change.

Visual Resources

Accept - Scenic quality within the Corn Springs area is rated as "excellent". Approval of the amendment will have little or no effect on scenic values. The surrounding lands, including the acreage which was formerly part of the ACEC, are protected by Class C and Class L management guidelines.

Reject - No effect.

Cultural Resources

Accept - The revised ACEC boundary would encompass the known extent of significant historical and archaeological resources. The original ACEC included a large amount of "cultural" buffer which was found to be unnecessary. The reduction of acreage would enhance the cultural resources within the new boundaries by focusing attention on the known resources rather than the larger buffer area.

Reject - No change.

Native American Values

Accept - Corn Springs was once a major occupation site for prehistoric Native American groups. Rockshelters, petroglyphs, trails, and other artifacts are still present. Acceptance of the amendment could be of concern for contemporary Serrano/ Cahuilla Indians.

Reject - No change.

Amendment Sixteen

Drop Sidewinder Well from ACEC status (ACEC #54, P. U. 90). (Map H)

Cultural Resources

Accept - The Sidewinder Well ACEC was established for cultural resources based upon predictive data. New on-the-ground data indicates that significant cultural sites do not exist within this ACEC. Therefore, the deletion of Sidewinder Well would have no effect upon the cultural resources of the area.

Reject - A wasteful allocation of BLM resources would result from creating, implementing, and monitoring an ACEC plan for an area containing no resource values worthy of ACEC protection.

Amendment Seventeen

Revise the Mountain Pass ACEC (#30) to exclude historical mining sites. (Map I, see Appendix B for details)

Vegetation

Accept - A number of rare plants have been observed in the nearby Mountain Pass/Clark Mountain area. There is a strong possibility that specimens could be located in the subject area. Acceptance of the amendment would permit access according to the guidelines for Class M, providing a possible threat to potential rare plants which might be in this vicinity. In the absence of an ACEC, less attention would be given to locating rare plants.

Reject - Rare plants which are predicted to occur in this area could be protected, if necessary by appropriate management.

Cultural Resources

Accept - This ACEC was nominated to protect a well preserved mining complex of the 1881 - 1915 period. Management of the ACEC would be impractical, however, since the most valuable mining remains are located on privately owned land.

Acceptance of this amendment would result in no additional impacts on cultural remains, since the Bureau has no authority to enforce restrictions on private land.

Reject - No effect.

Geological Resources

Accept- Redelineation of the ACEC boundary along roads and section lines to include only the paleontological resources, would provide a more manageable boundary and increase the protection of these resources.

Reject - No effect.

Amendment Eighteen

Increase AUMs in Deep Springs Allotment by 232.

Wildlife

Accept - Forage allocation for livestock would be increased, resulting in greater livestock damage to valuable riparian habitats, including those within the range of the black toad, a State-listed species.

Reject - Livestock management would continue at the level approved by the CDCA plan, approximately 20 percent less than that proposed.

Livestock Grazing

Accept - Operator could maintain current operation of 250 animals grazed for 5 months, and maintain current income and use of available forage.

Reject - A 20 percent cut in allocation would occur. This would result in management problems for 46 head of cattle which would have to be pastured elsewhere. A loss of 5 months of grazing for this many cattle would result in approximately $20,000 per year lost income. Lost fees to BLM would be $538 for the 1981 fee schedule. Based on a recent survey, the excess forage would not be utilized.

Amendment Nineteen

Adjust boundary between Tunawee and Lacey-Cactus-McCloud Allotments.
(Map A)

Vegetation

Accept - One Federally-listed plant species is found in the subject area - flat-seeded euphorbia. Increased livestock grazing

would probably have a positive effect, since this plant is unpalatable to cattle, and stirring up the soil could enhance seeding and new plant growth.

Reject - No effect.

Wildlife

Accept - The Tunawee allotment encompasses crucial Mojave ground squirrel habitat which will be managed through the Rose Valley Habitat Management Plan. Ground squirrels would be negatively impacted by increased utilization of forage by livestock.

Reject - No effect.

Livestock Grazing

Accept - An adjustment of the boundary between the Tunawee and Lacey-Cactus-McCloud allotments would be consistent with past grazing use. Transfer of 280 AUMs from the Lacey-Cactus-McCloud to the Tunawee allotment would reduce by 60 percent the impact of AUM reduction effected by the Desert Plan.

Currently, grazing in this area does not generate any use fees. Acceptance of the boundary change would result in annual fees of $650.

Reject - Management problems would continue, since the boundary between these two allotments is not consistent with natural barriers and logical usage. The operator would lose about 50 animals, or the equivalent of $20,000 per year. A loss of $650 in fees to the BLM would result.

Amendment Twenty

Increase AUMs for the Jean Lake Allotment from 251 to 298.

Wildlife

Accept - This allotment is in the Ivanpah tortoise crucial habitat. Impact to tortoises is not expected to be significant, however, since the subject area is not in high density habitat area.

Reject - No effect.

Livestock Grazing

Accept - Reevaluation of range condition has revealed the presence of two water sources which improve range suitability. The amendment wouls provide 47 additional AUMs and an increase of 4 head as a result of these previously unrecognized range improvements.

Reject - Newly recognized range improvements which increase the management capabilities of this operation would not be taken into account. Failure to increase the herd by 4 animals would reduce yearly income by $2,000.

Amendment Twenty One

Change designation of Lazy Daisy Grazing Allotment from ephemeral to ephemeral/perennial range, and change allotment boundaries, permitting re-authorization of 3,192 AUMs. (Map L)

Soils

Accept - Localized severe soil compaction would occur in areas where livestock concentrate, such as watering sites, holding areas, and on trails leading to water supplies. The amount of intensely compacted soil would most likely cover a very small proportion of the grazing allotment. There would probably be some accelerated erosion if new watering sites were established, but this would not be substantial if the areas were on relatively level terrain.

Reject - No change.

Livestock Grazing

Accept - The number of animals involved in the operation would remain the same. Use of the area adjacent to bighorn sheep habitat, which is the basis for the perennial allotment, would be permitted. No change from the current economic situation of the operator would result. BLM presently receives $7405 annually in grazing fees, and this figure would remain unchanged.

Reject - Year-round operation would cease. Operator claims he would lose lease and would be forced to sell out. The impact on his 14-children family would be severe since his potential income of $50,000 yearly, before expenses, would be eliminated. Economic impact on the surrounding region would not be significant.

Perennial forage would not be utilized by livestock, but would be set aside for wildlife use.

Wildlife

Accept - Reinstatement of highly crucial tortoise habitat east of Piute Mountain as permissible grazing area would occur. Negative impacts to this habitat would result.

The Plan's recommendation to exclude livestock from the subject area was based on the falacious premise that bighorn sheep occupied the area. Nonetheless, if proper range improvements are not made, the new boundary would be unmanageable and live-

stock would enter bighorn range. Therefore, impacts to bighorn sheep would depend upon restriction of livestock within the allotment. Without appropriate range improvements this is not a reasonable expectation.

Reject - No change.

Amendment Twenty Two

Add a new grazing allotment (Chemehuevi #61) to the Grazing Element for ephemeral use by cattle, only. (Map K)

Soils

Accept - Localized severe soil compaction would occur in areas where livestock concentrate, such as at watering sites, holding areas, and on trails leading to water supplies. The amount of intensely compacted soil would most likely cover a very small proportion of the grazing allotment. There would probably be some accelerated erosion if new watering sites were established, but this would not be substantial if the areas were on relatively level terrian.

Reject - No effect.

Vegetation

Accept - The Ward Chemehuevi Valley Crucifixion Thorn Assemblage is located in this proposed allotment. Palatability of this species is very low, however, and very little impact from grazing would be expected.

Reject - No effect.

Wildlife

Accept - Intrusion would be made into the Fenner/Chemehuevi desert tortoise crucial habitat. Populations in portions of this proposed allotment are 100-250 tortoises/mi^2. Impacts to the tortoise population would result from competition with livestock for forage.

Reject - No change.

Livestock Grazing

Accept - Legalizing a trespass problem would result. Presently, a group of American Indians are using the area without paying a grazing fee. An annual fee of approximately $400 would be established and paid to the Bureau.

Reject - Continued unauthorized use of the region would result until BLM would initiate trepass process. At that time a trespass processing cost would be incurred. The ephemeral forage would remain essentially unused after unauthorized grazing was stopped.

Native American Values

Accept - Native American applicants for this allotment claim they have been grazing the area for 40 years under BIA authorization. Approval of the amendment would legitimatize a continuing historic use of the area. It would allow continuation of a source of income for Native Americans who have been grazing the area. Known resources of Native American concern would not be adversely affected.

Reject - Economic hardship on Native Americans who depend upon livestock operations in the area would occur.

Amendment Twenty Three

Change wording in Grazing Element to distinguish between ephemeral use by sheep and by cattle. (see Appendix B for details)

Wildlife

Accept - No significant impacts on wildlife would occur. "Locator" cattle might produce slight impacts on habitats, especially on annuals in tortoise habitats.

Reject - No change.

Livestock Grazing

Accept - Conflict between on-the-ground management and Desert Plan direction would be resolved. Impossible management prescriptions written into the Plan for cattle operations would be remedied. Management of grazing operations could be in compliance with Plan directives.

Reject - Misinterpretation, non-compliance, and disregard for Plan direction would result. Potential for effective management would decrease.

Amendment Twenty Four

Change the Wild Horse and Burro Element to reflect the change in burro management policy at the Naval Weapons Center.

Wild Horse and Burros

Accept - All the Centennial Herd Management Area (HMA), both inside and outside the Naval Weapons Center, would be deleted. Exceptions would be Concentration Area #12, and the adjacent herd area east of the Argus Range, which would be combined with the Panamint HMA. The Slate HMA would have a total burro reduction within and outside the Mojave B Range.

The Desert Plan recognition of animals on U. S. Navy land, which presently number about 2000, would be decreased. An additional 200 animals would be removed from public land outside the Naval Weapons Center. This removal would increase the forage available for other uses or allocations. The net effect on the Burro Element would be a reduction of 1200 burros.

Reject - Removal of animals by the Naval Weapons Center would not be recognized by BLM, and unmanageable animals would be left adjacent to NWC. These remaining animals would cause adverse impact to NWC management.

Wildlife

Accept - Damage to critical bighorn sheep range in the Argus Range (proposed Habitat Management Area W-8) will be reduced. Specifically, additional forage will be available for the declining herds around the Naval Weapons Center and conflicts between burros and bighorn at watering sites may be eliminated. Damage, if any presently occurs, to riparian habitats due to burros will be eliminated. This habitat is especially critical to the continued existence of the Inyo Brown Towhee (State endangered) in and around the Argus Range ACEC.

Amendment Twenty Five

Designate a communication right-of-way site in P. U. 54 adjacent to the eastern boundary of Fort Irwin (T.15N., R.6E., SBM, SE1/4 NW1/4 SW1/4, Sect. 14). (Map M)

Public Land

Accept - A self-contained, portable communication site would be allowed in the Class L area, with the stipulation that construction and maintenance be done with the aid of helicopters. Power would be supplied by solar cells.

Little or [illegible]pact would occur on the subject location which [illegible]ontains [illegible]itive, rare, threatened or endangered wildlife or plants, and no sensitive cultural resources.

Soils are sensitive in the area, but human activity here would be confined to one weekly visit by a 4WD truck to monitor the power system, with minimal resulting impact. Environmental disturbance during construction would be minimal and could be adequately mitigated.

The amendment would benefit the Fort Irwin Training Center by allowing completion of a communications network which tracks locations of troops, vehicles, and aircraft.

Reject - Significant technical problems would be posed for the communications system required by Fort Irwin and would interfere with operations safety within the Training Center. No suitable alternative sites are available within the military boundaries.

Amendment Twenty Six

Change the multiple use class guidelines for saleable minerals (sand and gravel) in Class L to require an Environmental Assessment followed by a 60-day public review period. (see Appendix B for details)

Minerals

Accept - By deleting the EIS requirement except in cases where there is a significant adverse impact, sources of sand and gravel would be made available in a faster and more cost effective manner. To date, new sand and gravel sites over five acres in size have been "de facto withdrawn" due to the high cost, complexities, and time delays attendant to EIS preparation. BLM's resource area staffs would be provided the opportunity to concentrate on those cases in environmentally significant areas. Other resource values are fully protected under the 43 CFR 3600 regulations. The potential for mineral trespass could be decreased due to easier legal accessibility, and other important resource values in non-permitted extraction areas could thus receive more protection.

Reject - The possibility of continued trespass, additional cost and delays to users because of the EIS requirement, along with loss of field capacity to process cases in more sensitive areas, could occur.

Amendment 27

Reduce requirements in Class L from 60 days to 30 days for public review of plans of operation for mineral exploration and development.

Minerals

Accept - Quicker processing and therefore less delay to miners. Miners would be more inclined to file plans of operation since time between the filing and approval of plans would be reduced. The effort to seek public comment is one of the least successful ideas in the Desert Plan. To date, no one has commented on plans in Class L.

Reject - Maintaining the 60-day requirement would cause needless delay, since the public has not, this fair, shown an interest in the process.

Social/Political

Accept - Reduction of the public comment period to 30 days would limit the opportunity for individuals to become aware of and to comment on mining projects. Throughout the Desert Planning Program, a considerable portion of the public showed concern over the potential effects of mining in Class L. In addition, many persons requested extensions on comment periods; as an example, 60 persons made this request for the Final EIS/Proposed Plan for the California Desert Conservation Area. In view of the time required to publicize a project and to provide copies of documents to those who request them, a 30-day comment period seems unreasonably brief. Maintaining the presently required 60-day comment period would demonstrate the BLM's concern for a large segment of the interested public while producing only a modest slowing of the environmental process.

Reject - See inconvenience to miners discussed above.

B. Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative impacts of the candidate amendments are tabulated below. It is assumed that all of the amendments are approved.

There would be a net increase in Class M and I of 23,800 acres and a net decrease in the more protective Classes C and L of 28,700 acres. the amount of land covered by ACECs would be reduced by 15,500 acres. The number of AUM candidates for livestock grazing would be increased by 3,600.

CUMULATIVE CHANGE TO

THE CALIFORNIA DESERT PLAN

Plan Component	Net Change	% Change To Desert Plan
M U Classes		
C	-10,000 Ac	-00.5
L	-18,700 Ac	-00.3
M	+19,700 Ac	+00.6
I	+ 4,100 Ac	+00.8
Unclassified	+ 4,900 Ac	+01.6
ACECs	-15,500 Ac	-02.4
Grazing AUMs	+ 3,600 AUMs	+04.5

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Amendment Maps

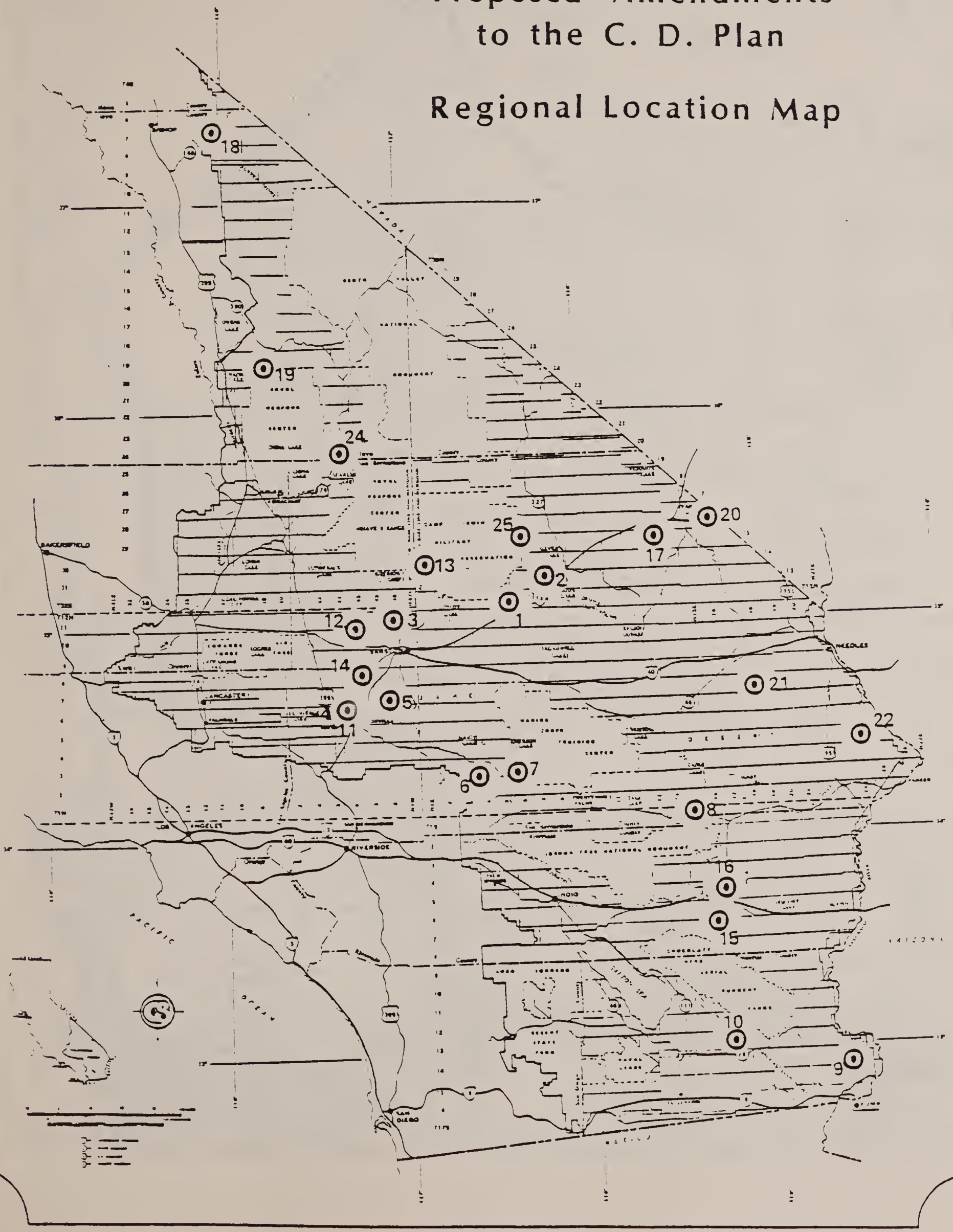
REGIONAL LOCATION MAP – Shows general location of Amendments

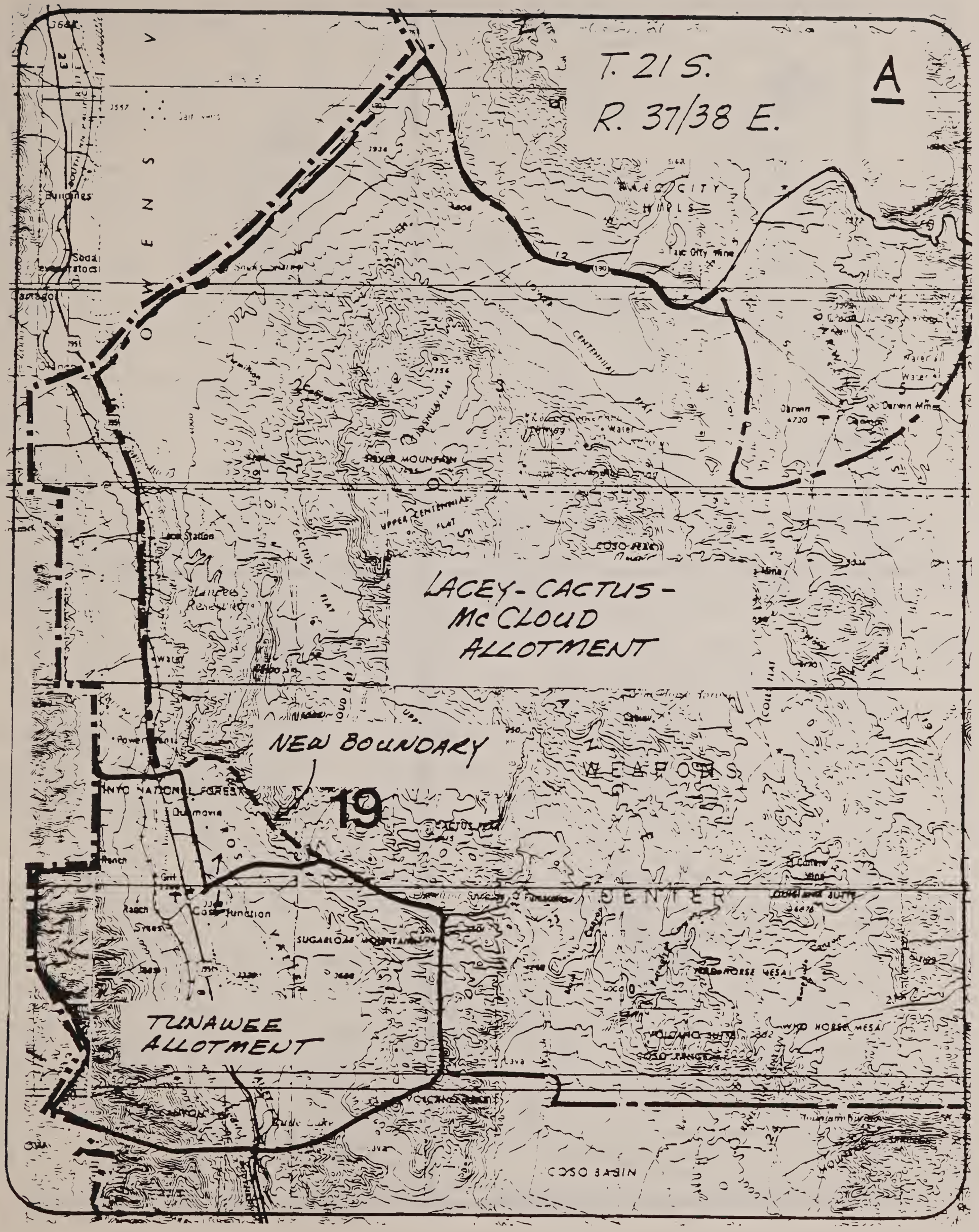
AREA MAPS	AMENDMENTS SHOWN
A	19
B	3, 12
C	13
D	1, 2
E	4, 5, 11, 14
F	6, 7
G	8
H	15, 16
I	17
J	9, 10
K	22
L	21
M	25

CALIFORNIA DESERT CONSERVATION AREA

Proposed Amendments to the C. D. Plan

Regional Location Map




T. 21 S.
R. 37/38 E.
A
LACEY - CACTUS -
MC CLOUD
ALLOTMENT
NEW BOUNDARY
19
TUNAWEE
ALLOTMENT
OWENS
INYO NATIONAL FOREST
CENTENNIAL
SUGARLOAF MOUNTAIN
COSO RANGE
COSO BASIN
WILD HORSE MESA
CENTER

B

DIABLO 42E 43E BASE 44E 45E LINE 46E 47E

6W 5W 4W 3W 2W

12

3

REDUCE ACEC #37
TO 480 ac.

CHANGE FROM
"M" TO "L"

ACEC #39

T. 11 N.
R. 4 W.

45


WEAPONS CENTER
T. 14 N.
R. 1 E.
C
28S
29S
30S
31S
32S
MOUNT DIABLO
SAN BERNARDINO
15N
13N
13
FORT
MILITARY
DROP GOLDSTONE
ACEC #27
Eagle Crags
Rifle range
SUPERIOR
VALLEY
Windmill
Ranch
Montana Mine
Gold Divide Mine
Opal Mountain
Water
Daisy Mine
45E
46E
LINE

T. 12/13 N.
R. 7 E.

D

CHANGE FROM
"L" TO "M"

CHANGE FROM
"L" TO "M"

T. 12 N.
R. 5 E.

NV
NJ

R-V A T I O N

MOUNTAINS

Mojave River Wash

Crescent dunes

Sand dunes

DEVILS PLAYGROUND

Sands

Dunn

Midway

Cadiz

Bagdad

Bath Siding

Cowhole Mountain

Little Cowhole Mountain

Union Pacific

Santa Fe

Crescent Valley

Grade

Sand Mountain

Cadiz Dunes

Bagdad

Cadiz

Dunn

Midway

Bath Siding

Crescent dunes

Sand dunes

Sands

Mojave River Wash

Union Pacific

Santa Fe

Grade

Crescent Valley

Sand Mountain

Cadiz Dunes

Cowhole Mountain

Little Cowhole Mountain

Devils Playground

DESIGNATE NEW ACEC-
Sclerocactus

14

DELETE
ACEC #44

4

11

CHANGE FROM
"M" to "I"

CHANGE FROM
"L" TO "M"

5

T. 6/7 N.
R. 2/3/4 W.

E

Victorville

Apple Valley

Hesperia

GEORGE AIR FORCE BASE

SIDEWINDER MOUNTAIN

N 17°30' W

117°15'

117°00'

43

T. 3 N.
R. 3/4/5 E.

F

116°45'

116°30'

UPPER JOHNSON VALLEY

JOHNSON VALLEY

TWENTYNINE PALMS

CHANGE FROM "M" TO UNCLASSIFIED

6

7

CHANGE FROM "L" TO UNCLASSIFIED

2N

1N

BLACK MOUNTAIN

FLAT TOP

Leaders 3400

Leaders

SAND HILL

Pioneer Town

Joshua Tree

SAN BERNARDINO BASE LINE

67

T. 1N. & 1S.
R. 15/16 E.

G

READJUST M.U.C.
"C" BOUNDARY

8

13E 14E 15E 16E 17E 18E

LINE

SAN BERNARDINO CO
RIVERSIDE CO

JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL MONUMENT
COXCOMB MOUNTAINS

Colorado River

Granite Mountains

Dunes

Desert Mountain Pumping Plant

Salt Evaporators

Yuma

Quien Sabe Mine

Pinto Wells

Black Eagle Well

T. 5 S.
R. 16/17 E.

H

DROP SIDEWINDER WELL - ACEC

16

15

REDUCE CORN SPGS ACEC

T. 6 S.
R. 16 E.

T. 16 N.
R. 14 E.

I

17

DELETE MT. PASS
ACEC #30

T. 13S.
R. 11/18 E.

T. 14 S.
R. 22/23 E.

J

10

CHANGE FROM
"C" TO "I"

9

CHANGE FROM
"L" TO "M"

SAND DUNES

U S NAVAL
IMPACT RANGE

SAND DUNES

SAND DUNES

PILOT KNOB MESA

SOUTHERN PACIFIC

CALIFORNIA

UNITED STATES

INDIAN RES

Coachella Canal

American Canal Waste

Ogilby

Powder Station

Hauchlein Lake

Sand dunes

R 19 E

R 20 E

R 21 E

R 22 E

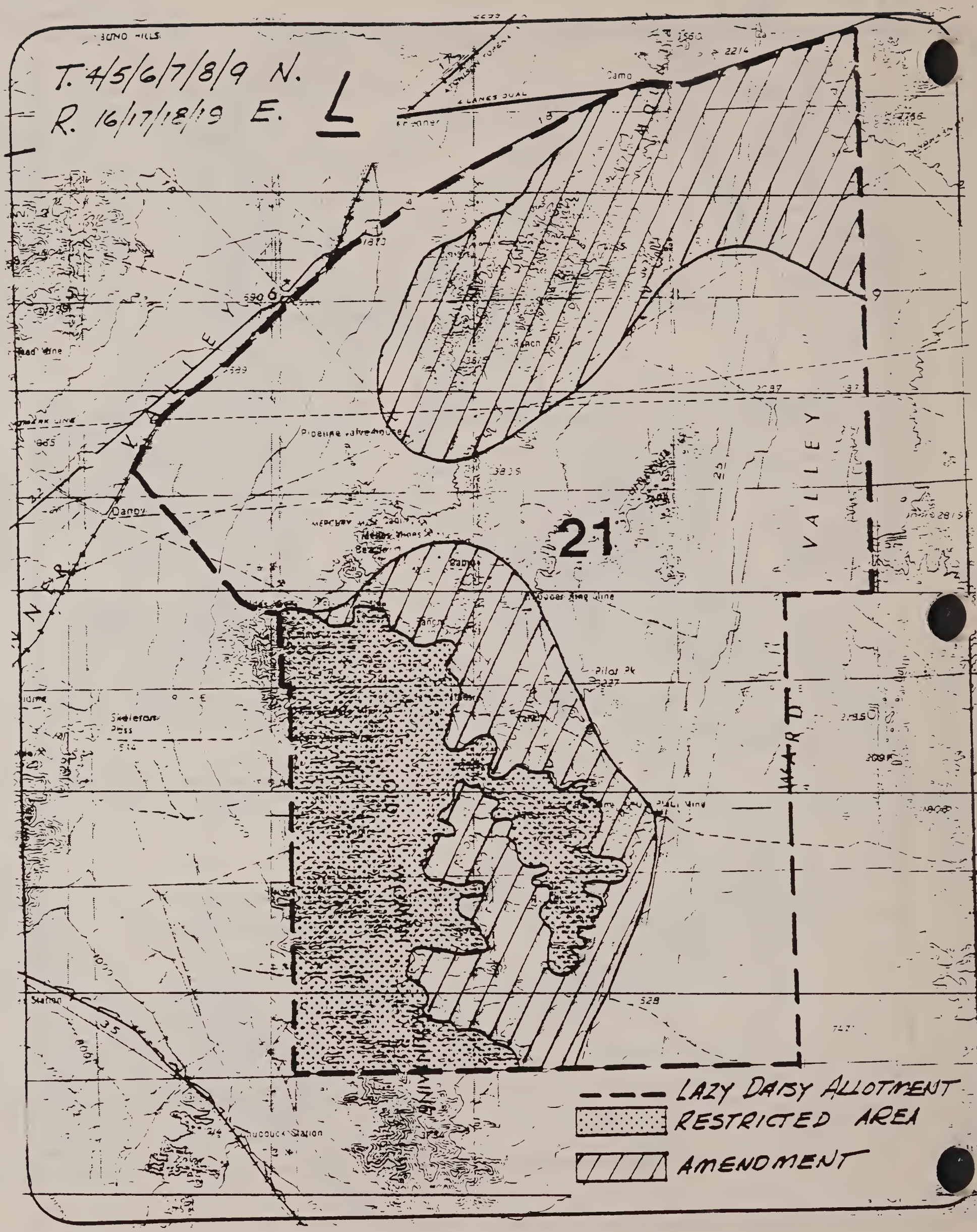
T. 4/5/6 N.
R. 21/22/23/24 E.

K

CHEMEHUEVI
GRAZING
ALLOTMENT

22

34°30'


T. 4/5/6/7/8/9 N.
R. 16/17/18/19 E.
L
21
VALLEY
R
N
LAZY DAISY ALLOTMENT
RESTRICTED AREA
AMENDMENT

T. 15 N.
R. 6 E. Sec. 14
SE¼, NW¼, SW¼

18N
17N
16N
15N
14N

FORT IRWIN

LITARY RESERVATION

COMMUNICATIONS SITE

25

Ripple Supply

Wood Creek Mine

Cemetery

VALJEAN VALLEY

VALJEAN HILLS

VALJEAN RAILROAD

Baker Ranch

56

APPENDIX B

TEXT CHANGES

Following is a list of amendments proposing changes to the text of the Desert Plan:

Amendment 14

New ACEC near Glendale for protection of a rare plant habitat (Sclerocactus). The following general management requirements would apply if the ACEC is designated:

1. Designation of approved routes of travel.
2. On the ground signing of vehicle and use restrictions.
3. Possible fencing of selected populations.
4. Acquisition of intermingled private lands through exchange, or the establishment of cooperative agreements.
5. Regular site monitoring.

Amendment 17

Revision of the boundary of ACEC #3, Mescal Range Geologic Area (formerly Mountain Pass ACEC). This amendment would delete the mining camp ruins at the historic Mescal Mine and change management requirements to the following:

1. Allow vehicle access only on approved routes in the Eastern Mescal Range area; allow only foot access within the reptile trackway area.
2. Patrol on a regular basis.
3. Do not attract attention to trackway through fencing.
4. Conduct an intensive paleontological inventory.
5. Avoid material sales within areas containing the fossil bearing rock formation.
6. Acquire that portion of Section 36 from the State of California through the land tenure adjustment program.

Amendment 23

Change requirements for ephemeral grazing.

This proposed amendment would change the text of the Livestock Grazing Element of the California Desert Plan as follows:

1. Section tilled "Ephemeral Range" (see the right column on page 39 of the Desert Plan). Insert the following paragraph between tne first and second paragraphs:

Because of the significant difference between sheep grazing habits and practices and cattle grazing, different stipulations on livestock class will be in effect. For ephemeral cattle operations, turnout of animals would be determined annually by an interdisciplinary team, including the grazing operator, based on considerations for maintaining an adequate amount of annual forage production for wildlife, erosion prevention, and visual needs.

2. Delete and reword the second paragraph as follows:

Allotments classified as ephemeral sheep operations would be managed under ephemeral authorizations. Authorizations would be issued after an interdisciplinary team, along. . . . . .

3. Reward the section tilled "Ephemeral/Perennial Range" on page 70, second paragraph, to read:

The restrictions for livestock turnout and monitoring presented under Ephemeral Range above would pertain to only those livestock authorized for annual forage production. Locator animals maintained on ephemeral/perennial range year long may remain on waters located in predominantly ephemeral forage. This methodology would allow cattle to remain at year-long waters to orient stocker cattle to ephemeral range during those seasons when it is

determined that temporary nonrenewable ephemeral authorization is available. Regular fees will be charged. It is recognized that cattle may drift back and forth between the rather indefinite boundary between perennial and ephemeral ranges. Determination of this temporary nonrenewable ephemeral authorization will be made according to stipulations mentioned under Ephemeral Range Type.

Amendment 26

Change Mineral Guidelines in Class L.

This proposed amendment would change the text of the guidelines for Saleable Minerals under Multiple Use Class L (page 19 of the California Desert Plan) to read:

> Except as provided in Appendix 5.4, 516 DM6, NEPA procedures entitled, "Categorical Exclusions," an EA shall be required for material sales locations including sand and gravel sites. As this class is a sensitive area of public concern, a 60-day public review period shall be required on the EA.

The amendment would also change the text in the Geology, Energy, and Minerals Resource Element of the Desert Plan. Reword the last paragraph under the section titled "Multiple-Use Class Provisions" page 102 to read:

> Mineral material sales in Classes L, M, and I will be processed under 43 CFR 23 and 3600. In addition, in new extraction areas located in Class L, a 60-day period will be provided for public review and comment on the proposal.

APPENDIX C

PUBLIC INPUT

Introduction

In response to the invitation to the public to comment on the Plan and to suggest needed changes, 58 letters were received from the public. Of these 58 letters the vast majority were from individuals - 81 percent. Business and organizations each contributed 7 percent of the response, while governmental agencies or elected officials provided only three letters - 5 percent.

Table 1 - Type of Respondent

Respondent Type	Letters
Individuals	47
Organizations	4
Businesses	4
Elected Officials	1
Federal Agencies	1
Utility Companies	1

The bulk of the responses were sent by California residents (84%). However, the proportion of out-of-state commenters (16%) was greater than for either the Final EIS/Proposed Plan (12%) or the Draft Plan (4%). Roughly one-fourth of the California respondents live within the boundaries of the CDCA.

Geographic Origin of Responses

Origin	Letters
CDCA	11 (19%)
Non-CDCA California	38 (65%)
Out-of-State	9 (16%)

General Overview

The large majority of letters contained general comments about the Desert Plan and expressed concern for the use and protection of the desert. Thirteen individuals or organizations presented suggestions for changes in the Plan, either in its policies or land use designations. Twenty-six possible amendments or plan interpretations were considered as a result of these proposals. These will be described in a later section.

In addition, a few letters provided new site-specific information which has been forwarded to our resource specialists for use in future Plan implementation.

Twelve respondents supported the Plan and expressed approval of the massive effort involved in preparing a program for management of the resources of the California desert. Nine were appreciative of the opportunity to comment on the Plan. Only one letter expressed complete displeasure with the Plan, due to what was seen to be a lack of protectiveness.

Over one quarter of the respondents (16 letters) urged greater protection of the desert ecology and resources. Wildlife was the resource mentioned most often as being in need of protection (9 letters). Vandalism and vehicle harassment were listed as major threats, and protection of habitat was urged. Vegetation also was felt to be threatened (4 letters), particularly by ORV activities and plant thieves. Cultural resources was mentioned by one writer as also being endangered.

Several individuals mentioned the difficulty of controlling vehicle use and the need for more enforcement of the Plan and its guidelines. Others recommended greater efforts to educate the desert-going public in natural history and "good citizenship" in order to encourage desert preservation.

As in the past, vehicle access was the topic of numerous comments. Three individuals expressed a desire for access for mining, hunting, rock collecting, and exploring. One organization requested the opening of more routes of travel by changing particular areas from multiple use Class L to Class M.

In contrast, 16 writers urged restriction of ORV use to protect sensitive desert resources. An interest in the route-approval process was shown by a few commenters, as was the fear that this procedure would be too prolonged.

Specific complaints were made by two residents of the El Mirage Dry Lake/ Shadow Mountain area about trespass of recreationists on private property.

A few comments were made concerning different types of recreational activities. Motorcyclists proposed the opening of two additional race routes for competitive events, and landsailers requested that access to certain dry lakes be limited to nonmotorized vehicles. A recreational gold miner asked that the desert be open to his hobby. Rock hounds wished to continue their hobby but expressed the desire to avoid destructive uses of desert resources. One respondent opposed all hunting in the CDCA while, as mentioned above, 16 people favored strict control of ORV recreation.

Wilderness was still a topic of concern. Three letters advocated the protection of wilderness values in recommended wilderness areas until Congress has taken action. One organization suggested that Wilderness Study Areas not designated as wilderness by Congress should be placed in class "M" (see next section). Inclusion of specific sites within the recommended wilderness class was urged by two individuals (see next section).

Wild horses and burros elicited seven comments. Four stated that the problem caused by these animals had been overstated and wished to see an increase in the number permitted to remain in the desert. Three others were for even greater reductions than those provided in the Plan.

Individual letters also mentioned such diverse topics as the threat of future jojoba plantations, the need to protect grazing lands, the use of desert winds as a source of energy, the desire to protect ACECs from adjacent conflicting uses, and the need to coordinate wilderness planning with the use of "research natural areas" by educational institutions.

APPENDIX D

AMENDMENTS NOT CONSIDERED

This section lists those amendments proposed by the public that are not being considered at this time and gives reasons for the decisions.

Pleasant Canyon (P.U. 25, Ridgecrest RA) - Change the upper portion from "L" to "I". Present mining operations have a visible impact. The presence of strategic minerals in the area foreshadows continuing and increasing mining activity. (Margaretha Krucker, Los Angeles)

The mineral potential and active mining along the west-facing canyons of the Panamint Mountain range were considered during development of the plan. There was also strong pressure from conservation groups to designate this area Class C (proposed wilderness). The decision to designate this range Class L was, in fact, a compromise to protect resources, provide a buffer for the Death Valley Monument, and allow mineral expansion and development to continue.

Area surrounding and south of Superior Lake (P.U. 32, Barstow RA) - change from "L" to "M". The area is impacted by past and present mining. There is considerable ORV use which is not likely to change; thus, enforcement would be difficult. (Rick Hammel, District 37 AMA)

Because of the wildlife and cultural values in this area, the proposed amendment was placed on "hold." The area needs to be redefined in order to avoid critical resources.

Area between Stoddard Valley and Johnson Valley "open" areas (P.U. 38b, Barstow RA) - change from "L" to "M". Because of its location adjacent to the Johnson Valley "open play area," this general area has received heavy ORV use for many years. It is also bisected by the Stoddard Valley-to-Johnson Valley race corridor. Rick Hammel, District 37 AMA)

Based on staff analysis and concurrence by the Council that no new information was presented, it was decided not to consider this proposal at this time.

Devil's Playground or Kelso Dunes and Glamis Dunes (P.U. 59, 61, 103, Barstow, Needles RAs) - change to Class I, or at least to Class L. Desire to use dunes for family trips, not competition. (Robert L. Wheeler, Loma Linda)

Conflict between motorized recreation use and protection of sensitive resources in these areas has been given a great deal of consideration in the development of the Plan. The desire on the part of ORV enthusiasts

to open the Kelso Dunes and expand open use in the Imperial Dunes is well known. At this time, however, consideration will not be given to amending the motorized vehicle designations for these areas.

Mountain Pass (P.U. 65, 67, Needles RA) - enlarge boundaries of intensive use (Class I) area. Class I area includes only a small part of the contiguous mining claims. These ore bodies will be mined in the future. (Molycorp, Inc.)

Class M, the current designation of this area, permits expansion for future mining operations subject to approval of plans of operation. It was decided to reject this proposed amendment at this time.

Burro Canyon - Woods Mountain area (P.U. 71, Needles RA) - change from "L" to "C" (recommended wilderness) to protect petroglyph sites and cactus collections.

Burro Canyon is recognized as an area containing sensitive resources. This fact was considered in the development of the Plan and in the final decision to classify the area Class L (limited use) which would protect these resources. (Judyth Donaghey, Merritt College, Oakland)

Imperial Sand Hills (P.U. 102, 103, El Centro RA) - recommend more land for wilderness, in order to protect unusual plant assemblages and flat-tailed horned lizard. (Patrick Carnahan, Long Meadow, MA)

Specific measures were taken to protect the flat-tailed horned lizards through two ACECs: East Mesa (#70) and Yuha Basin (#61).

The issue of ORV use vs sensitive resources in these dunes was given careful consideration during development of the Plan. The amount of area designated "open" to motorized vehicle use was substantially reduced from the amount of area designated in the Interim Critical Management Plan for off-road vehicles (ICMP) which was adopted in 1973. Further reduction of the "open" area in the Imperial Dunes or increase in proposed wilderness (Class C) in this area will not be considered at this time.

The following ACECs should be deleted: West Rand Mountains (#2), Cronese Lake (#74), Mopah Spring (#75). These ACECs were not identified in the Proposed Plan and were not subject to public review. (County of San Bernardino Economic Development Department)

The designation of the above additional ACECs as part of the final Desert Plan is being challenged in court at this time. All amendment decisions related to the three ACECs will be placed on "hold" until this case is settled.

East Mojave National Scenic Area (EMNSA) should not be designated. The EMNSA is not in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, since it was not presented in the Draft or Proposed Plan and was not addressed in the environmental impact statement. (San Bernardino County Economic Development Department)

The designation of the East Mojave National Scenic Area as part of the final Desert Plan is being challenged in court at this time. All amendment decisions related to the EMNSA will be placed on "hold" until this case is settled.

Adjust northern boundary of East Mojave National Scenic Boundary to one mile south of 3rd standard parallel north of San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian. The existing mining operation at Mountain Pass is not consistent with the scenic area designation. (Molycorp, Inc.)

Designation of the East Mojave Scenic Area in the final Plan is being challenged in court at this time. All amendments to the EMSA will be placed on "hold" pending the outcome of this case.

Rand Mountains should be closed to ORVs except on designated routes (P.U. 21, Ridgecrest R.A.). (Irene Heath, Kern Audubon Society)

This issue was considered during the development of the Plan. Conflict between high wildlife values and use by motorcycle clubs for competition was recognized. The decision to establish the Rand Mountain ACEC was intended to minimize this conflict.

East Sierra Canyons need road designation restriction to prevent abuse from ORVs (P.U. 19, Ridgecrest RA). The wildlife habitat is very sensitive in that region. (Irene Heath, Kern Audubon Society)

This area has been given high priority in the route designation process and in development and implementation of the Jawbone/Butterbread ACEC (#20). No plan amendment is required.

Add two point-to-point race courses: (a) Johnson Valley to Stateline, and (b) Chiriaco Summit to Parker. There is a great desire on the part of the ORV community to add these courses to the Plan. Addition of courses provides option of using rotational concept. (Rick Hammel, District 37 AMA)

These changes to the Plan would require an Environmental Impact Statement. The proposed amendment will be placed on "hold" pending availability of funds to conduct an EIS. Priority will be given to the Johnson Valley-to-Stateline course.

Close Soggy Dry Lake to all but nonmotorized vehicles (P.U. 40, Barstow RA). This would prevent "tearing up" the lake surface until it becomes unusable to landsailing. (Harvey Hopkins, Lunar Landyacht Club)

The conflict between motorized and nonmotorized vehicle use of dry lakes was considered during preparation of the Plan and it was decided that Soggy Dry Lake will be designated open because it is within the Johnson Valley open area.

Desert Plan should recognize California Energy Commission decision (1-28-81) ranking Ivanpah Site as preferred location for Edison's proposed power plant. BLM should recognize this decision when developing management guidelines for East Mojave National Scenic Area and Clark Mountain ACEC (P.U. 68, Needles RA). (Southern California Edison Company)

This proposal was accepted as a "Category 3" amendment, i.e., proposed change is submitted to accommodate a request for a specific use (power generating plant) which would require additional analysis and decision beyond the Plan Amendment decision (see Amendment Process, Chapter 7, pages 143-146, of the Desert Plan). Upon completion of the approved process, the necessary changes to the Plan will be made, including changes to the utility element and multiple use classifications of the surrounding land.

For multiple use Class L, the guidelines for Motorized Vehicle Access/ Transportation on page 18 of the Plan should be the same as for multiple use Class M when such use is for mineral exploration and development. Motorized access to public lands is essential for mineral exploration and development. Use of existing routes minimizes the environmental impact of these activities, yet provides for this essential access. (San Bernardino County Economic Development Department)

Vehicle access is allowed in Classes L, M, and I for mineral exploration and development if the plan of operations has been approved. The wording in the Minerals Element will be changed to clarify this point. No amendment is required.

Hazardous and new nonhazardous waste disposal sites associated with mineral or other development on BLM managed land should be allowed in areas designated multiple use Classes L, M, and I. Wastes associated with mining and mineral processing often include large volumes of overburden, tailings, and milling and processing wastes. Disposal of such wastes on public lands at such operations must be allowed if performed in an environmentally acceptable manner. (San Bernardino County Economic Development Department)

The disposal of nonhazardous waste material at the mine site is permitted as shown on the plans of operation. Disposal of hazardous waste material on public land is regulated under 42 USC 3251. No amendment is required.

For multiple use Class C the guidelines for mineral exploration and development on Page 18 of the Plan should state only that mineral exploration and development for locatable minerals would be managed subject to 43 CFR 3802 until formally designated as wilderness by Congress. The use of any management guidelines whatsoever in addition to the requirements of 43 CFR 3802 will unnecessarily hinder mineral exploration and development planning. The use of hypothetical management guidelines as presented on Page 18 is confusing and misleading. (San Bernardino County Economic Development Department)

We agree that the wording of the guidelines for mineral exploration and development is not clear. Clarifications of this type do not, however, require Plan amendment. We will revise this section in accordance the subject recommendations when the guidelines are edited for republication.

Wilderness Study Areas not designated as wilderness by Congress should be placed into multiple use Class M unless designated as Class I or L either by Congress or through the Plan amendment process. Areas not designated as wilderness should be returned to a multiple use class allowing a balance between use and protection such as Class M. If sensitive natural, scenic, ecological, or cultural resource values or if intensive use resources exist in the area, redesignation to Class L or I may be made through the amendment process. (San Bernardino County Economic Development Department)

It will be our policy to initiate amendments to the Plan immediately after Congress acts on the proposed wilderness areas. Those rejected areas will be placed in appropriate classifications - ("L", "M", and "I") through the amendment process.

Amend the Amendment Process so that:

a. Amendments may be proposed at any time.

b. Preparation of an EIS is restricted to amendments affecting Class C areas only.

c. The District Manager must acknowledge receipt, give his written decision on whether or not the proposal will be considered, and categorize the proposal within 30 days of the end of the comment period, unless an EIS is required.

d. Notification of a proposed amendment is published immediately upon the decision to consider them.

e. A final decision on the proposed amendment is made within 30 days of the end of the comment period, unless an EIS is required.

The amendment process as presented in the Plan hampers the timely review of proposed amendments and unduly delays action on proposed projects that require amendment of the Plan. The amendment process must be streamlined to allow BLM to respond to the constantly changing needs of public land users in the CDCA. (San Bernardino County Economic Development Department)

The amendment process should be "streamlined" to permit the BLM to be more responsive to the public, and to changes needed by land users. The process of testing the current procedures outlined in the Plan is presently in progress. In addition, it should be noted that the planning regulations are being revised at the Washington level to simplify the process and make it more responsive.